

Armed Forces answered the call of duty. These patriotic men and women defended our country in hours of need and continue to stand watch for freedom. Many of these courageous individuals risked capture, imprisonment, and their lives to protect our homeland. On National POW/MIA Recognition Day, we honor the sacrifices and remarkable determination of those captured as prisoners of war. We also remember those who remain unaccounted for and ask for God's special blessing on their families. Our Nation will not forget these heroes, and we will not stop searching for our service members who are missing in action.

On National POW/MIA Recognition Day, the flag of the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia is flown over the White House, the Capitol, the Departments of State, Defense, and Veterans Affairs, the Selective Service System Headquarters, the National Vietnam Veterans and Korean War Veterans Memorials, U.S. military installations, national cemeteries, and other locations across our country. This flag serves as a reminder of our continued commitment to those still missing and those imprisoned while serving in World War II, Korea, Vietnam, the Persian Gulf, Somalia, Kosovo, Iraq, and other conflicts. We remain grateful for their service and sacrifice and pledge to continue to achieve the fullest possible accounting for all of our men and women in uniform still missing.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim September 14, 2004, as National POW/MIA Recognition Day. I call upon the people of the United States to join me in saluting all American POWs and those missing in action who valiantly served our great country. I call upon Federal, State, and local government officials and private organizations to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this fourteenth day of September, in the year of our Lord two thousand four, and of the Independence of the United

States of America the two hundred and twenty-ninth.

George W. Bush

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NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on September 17.

**Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives Transmitting
Emergency Supplemental
Appropriations Requests
September 14, 2004**

Dear Mr. Speaker:

On September 6th, I submitted a supplemental request totaling \$2 billion for the Department of Homeland Security for urgent needs associated with Hurricanes Charley and Frances. The Congress' prompt action on this request ensured that immediate response efforts to these recent disasters would continue uninterrupted. In addition to utilizing the supplemental funds provided in Public Law 108-303, the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Act, Federal Government agencies will continue to use existing resources and programs for response and recovery efforts.

I now ask the Congress to consider the enclosed requests, totaling \$3.1 billion, for additional emergency FY 2004 supplemental appropriations for the Departments of Defense, Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, Housing and Urban Development, the Interior, and Veterans Affairs, the Corps of Engineers, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the Small Business Administration, and the Executive Office of the President.

I hereby designate these specific proposals in the amounts requested herein as emergency requirements. As I stated in my previous request, these additional requests will allow for a comprehensive response and recovery effort to address the critical needs associated with both of these hurricanes in Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, and other affected areas. I urge the Congress to limit this emergency request to those items

directly related to the recovery efforts from the impact of these recent major disasters.

The details of these requests are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

Remarks at the Hispanic Heritage Month Reception

September 15, 2004

Thank you all for coming. *Bienvenidos a la Casa Blanca*. [Laughter] Thanks for coming. Laura and I are thrilled to have you here. We welcome you to the—to observe Hispanic Heritage Month. What a performance. Thank you all very much. It was spectacular.

This is the month we celebrate great contributions of Latinos to our country. It's a special month. It really echoes our diversity and the strength of our great democracy. I spend a lot of time talking about the transformational power of liberty, reminding people that liberty has got an incredible way of taking diverse people and uniting them into one common purpose—*pais*, a great land. That's why we believe democracy has a place in our own neighborhood. We believe that liberty is important in countries throughout our hemisphere. We believe in human dignity and human rights, the nonnegotiable demands of human dignity. And that's best achieved through liberty.

That's why we're working to advance liberty in the greater Middle East. We believe all people desire to be free. We believe that inherently in the soul of men and women is this desire to live in free societies. It's worked here in America. It can work everywhere. Think about our country. We're such a diverse land with different cultures all bound together in this great country because of freedom.

You know, recently I talked to President Putin of Russia. I told him this country mourns the loss of life as a result of the terrorist attacks, the terrorist attack on the school. I told him we stand shoulder to shoulder with them in fighting terror, that we abhor men who kill innocent children to try to achieve a dark vision. I'm also concerned

about the decisions that are being made in Russia that could undermine democracy in Russia, that great countries, great democracies have a balance of power between central government and local governments, a balance of power within central governments between the executive branch and the legislative branch and the judicial branch. As governments fight the enemies of democracy, they must uphold the principles of democracy.

I also want to say something, as we gather, about Hurricane Ivan. I talked to the Governors of Mississippi and Alabama and Louisiana, *tambien mi hermano, el Gobernador de Florida*. I told him the people of this country—I told all four Governors the people of this country are praying for their safety. We pray that the storm passes as quickly as possible without any loss of life or loss of property, and that—I told them that the Government is ready to help.

I appreciate Hector. I want to thank you for your service. I appreciate Secretary Evans and Secretary Chao, members of my Cabinet who have joined us today. I'm proud of your work.

We've got Ambassadors here. This is an important month, by the way, and we're tracking a lot of big shots. [Laughter] Hans Hertell is with us. Hans, thanks for coming. He's the Ambassador to the Dominican Republic, *mi amigo*.

Gaddi Vasquez, who's the Director of the Peace Corps. Roger Noriega is Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs. Eduardo Aguirre is the Director of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. Al Gonzales is my lawyer. [Laughter] He is the White House Counsel to the President. Ruben Barrales is the Director of Intergovernmental Affairs. I'm naming people that work in my administration. I think it's important to promote a diverse administration, to welcome all cultures, and we're better for it here in Washington. And I want to thank them for their service.

I want to thank the *Embajador de Colombia y tambien de Mexico y el nuevo Embajador de Espana*. Welcome today to the White House for the credentialing ceremony. I want to thank the three Ambassadors for coming. Welcome. *Bienvenidos*.